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1961 - 2019

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GRAB MICHAEL

Single sensation: An interview with actor Michael Urie

By Gregg Shapiro

Some of us first fell in love with Michael Urie when he played the lead character in Brian Sloan's movie adaptation of his play *WTC View*, about a gay man's search for a roommate in the wake of 9/11. Many others first laid eyes on him in the popular ABC sitcom *Ugly Betty* in which he played Marc, the put-upon assistant to fashion magazine creative director Wilhelmina (Vanessa Williams). More recently, Urie could be seen on Broadway in the *Torch Song Trilogy* revival as well as alongside Udo Kier in gay filmmaker Todd Stephens' acclaimed 2021 movie Swan Song. In December, Urie stars as Peter, the romantic lead in Netflix's entry in the LGBTQ+ holiday movie scene, *Single All the Way.* Michael was gracious enough to answer a few questions about movie before its premiere.

Gregg Shapiro: I'd like to begin by apologizing for asking the most obvious question first, but what was it about Peter that made you want to play him in Single All the Way?
Michael Urie: As soon as I read the script, I was completely charmed and delighted by it. I'm a big fan of Christmas movies, and I actually knew the writer, Chad Hodge, a little bit. I'd seen his TV shows and we knew each other socially. So, I was excited to read it, and then I found it so charming, really funny, and also very romantic. Every time I read it, I would get choked up and laugh out loud. But I think specifically the role of Peter was really enticing to me because his problem was not being gay. It wasn't about coming out. It wasn't about any kind of shame or any kind of trauma or any kind of homophobia. His problem was the same kind of problem that straight people have in Christmas movies. And I really liked that, I really appreciated that, because it's still extremely gay and [laughs]as somebody who plays a lot of gay characters and is in a lot of gay projects, it was really meaningful to me to be in a project where the joy and the love and the comedy came not out of overcoming anything or hiding from anything, but from other normal ways. His conflicts are not unlike the conflicts of any old straight person.

GS: As far as his family was concerned, their issue with him was that he was single, not that he was gay.
MU: Exactly! He's not single because he's gay, he's single because he's single. He's lousy at that dating and that is a completely normal thing for a gay person to be. I was really charmed by the fact that this was going to be the first time Netflix went out with a story like this.

GS: As winter holidays go, where

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does Christmas fall on your list of favorites?
MU: Oh, I love Christmas! Of that season, I would much rather make a to-do for Christmas than, say, Thanksgiving or even Valentine's Day. I mean I love Valentine's Day and Thanksgiving, but Christmas is also very romantic. I loved Christmas when I was a kid. I loved the presents, I loved not having to go to school. Then when I left home and was single, I lost interest in Christmas. It seemed like a chore to me to have to get presents and tell people what I wanted. Then I met my partner, Ryan, and he comes from a family that loves Christmas. My family does, too, but his family really loves Christmas. And he loves Christmas. So, suddenly experiencing Christmas through his eyes and the eyes of his family was so delightful. I fell in love with it again as a grown-up, and I think that's partially because of how romantic it is. It's so much nicer to do the Christmas stuff with someone to cuddle up with.

GS: Speaking of romance, in *Single All the Way* you are playing a romantic leading man. What are the rewards, aside from having Philemon Chambers and Luke Macfarlane as your love interests, and challenges of such a part?
MU: Playing the romantic leading man is great because you have most of the lines [laughs], and you're the guy with the problem. What's also great about doing it in a movie is that when you're prepping a movie, at least in my experience…I haven't done that many movies that I'm in all the way through. I've done a few movies that I was a lead of, and I had lots of scenes. But you don't shoot in order, and if you're a supporting character you only come in and out. But when you're the lead, when it's your story, as you're preparing it, you can really get a sense of the whole thing. So, I read the whole script. I wouldn't just jump around to my scenes, because I was in almost every scene. So, I got a real sense of the arc and it made shooting it so much easier, actually. Because I was able to really know my lines from reading it so many times all the way through, and studying, but also because I always knew where he was. We could jump around in the schedule, and I would know where Peter was in the story because I was so familiar with the whole thing. I would know what happened before and what was happening after. It really helped, as an actor, to know where I was.

GS: Peter has a demanding career and active social life in LA, but is willing to chuck it all for small-town living. Could you ever imagine doing something like that?
MU: I don't think so. At the beginning of the pandemic, I tried to convince my partner to move to Palm Springs [laughs]. I don't know that that's necessarily a small town, and I don't know that I thought we would go there forever. I thought, "Let's go move there and when the pandemic is over, we'll move back." I don't know. I mean I really love the city. I had a great childhood and I did enjoy living in the suburbs in Texas, but the moment I stepped foot in New York, when I was 17 years old, in Midtown, outside Port Authority with garbage and July heat, I was like, "I love it here!" It really is sort of my town and it's hard to imagine that it would ever not be, but never say never.

GS: Single All the Way is the second 2021 movie, along with Swan Song, in which both you and Jennifer Coolidge appear. In Single All the Way you get to have considerable screen time with

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Jennifer. What was that experience like for you?
MU: It was a lot more fun than my experience with her on Swan Song since we never crossed paths. I loved making Swan Song, and my part of the movie was shot after her part of the movie, so it was really fun to show up and hear all of the stories about how fun it was to have her in a small town in Ohio. I will say working with her is as fun as you would imagine, as surprising as you would imagine. On the one hand, everybody knows her thing, everybody sort of knows what she does. In fact, Chad Hodge, our writer, wrote the role in hopes that she would play it. In the script, when it says, "Enter Aunt Sandy," in parentheses it says, "Think Jennifer Coolidge." That was always the hope and the plan. And yet still, knowing that it was written for her, knowing her body of work, she still surprises me. I still don't know how she's going to spin a line. And when she goes off-script, you have no idea what she's going to say, and it's always something amazing. I knew she'd be funny; I knew she'd be cool. I knew we'd have a good time and she'd be terrific in the role, but I didn't know how surprised I would be. Luckily, in the movie, all the characters are just as delighted by Aunt Sandy as all of us are of Jennifer Coolidge. There's not a lot of acting going on in those scenes.

GS: You mentioned the fact that Netflix is joining the fray of gay-themed holiday movies. What do you think of this trend of streaming networks creating queer holiday movies such as *Single All the Way* and 2020's *Happiest Season*?
MU: I think it's good and it's important. I think romance is not isolated to heterosexual relationships and neither is Christmas. The gays love Christmas, and the gays love Christmas movies. So, throwing them some, I think, is going to be really good. Because they're so popular, I think providing a movie like this or Happiest Season to the cross-section of people who will watch any Christmas movie is only going to broaden people's ideas and give people a real sense of how we're ultimately the same. The movie is not about how we're different. It's about the ways in which we are alike. Christmas, romance; we can meet on a lot of things, queer people and straight people. I think it's exciting and inspiring to be part of that.

GS: Peter has a green thumb, which is a big part of the movie. Do you have similar success with plants?
MU: I could kill a cactus [laughs]. Actually, my partner's out of town right now. He's pretty good at plants and I have to take care of his plants and that is keeping me up at night. I can keep a dog alive and a cat alive, but I'm not great with plants. But I will say that I find them kind of sexy. Walking onto the set for Peter and Nick's apartment, and seeing the wall of plants, and knowing that those are Peter's plants and he loved them and took care of them and named them. I was like, this is the most interesting thing, so far, about this guy. Not his job as a social media person. Not his neurosis around dating, but this plant thing is exciting.

GS: Finally, Michael, are there any upcoming projects you'd like to mention?
MU: I'm in the movie of *Jersey Boys*, the musical about Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons which played Broadway forever. We put the show up this summer and filmed it for a streaming service. Nick Jonas played Frankie Valli and he was so good. It was a lot of fun. That's going to be out sometime; but I don't know when.

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GRAB JINKX AND DELA

Two Sister Queens for Christmas

Jinkx Monsoon and BenDeLaCreme on taking their holiday show back on the road

By Chris Azzopardi

No, Jinkx Monsoon and BenDeLaCreme aren't roommates. But the "RuPaul's Drag Race" alums get that you might think so. After all, during our recent Zoom call, they _were_ sharing a physical space.

"We're just together right now," DeLa says, before kidding that "every time we're getting ready for the holiday show, I kidnap Jinkx and hold her captive in my basement until the show is done. That's our writing process."

What does Jinkx have to say about all this? "I develop Stockholm Syndrome," she says, "and have to be deprogrammed." She adds that this is "how we create the illusion of sisterhood and togetherness on stage."

Just the opposite is true, of course. There's no illusion. Or basement. (We think.)

Instead, these two are drag sisters through and through, even if they love to feign the dramatic frenemy tension that makes, for example, their holiday shows an irresistibly catty treat. Though last year the pandemic got in the way of their live show — instead, they made the movie "The Jinkx & DeLa Holiday Special" — they're back on the road again this year for "The Jinkx & DeLa Holiday Show."

Chris Azzopardi: I hope that you're getting fed in that basement, Jinkx.
Jinkx Monsoon: Yeah. I gotta say one thing: As a producer, DeLa makes sure I am fed and fed well.
BenDeLaCreme: Foie gras goose. Just a straw down the gullet, and just pile it in. Gotta keep my little cash cow goin'.

CA: How do you plan on topping "The Jinkx & DeLa Holiday Special"?
DeLa: Topping! Get it?
Jinkx: Yeah, we're gonna top it consensually and with plenty of lube. Every year we have to ask ourselves: How are we gonna top last year's show? And it just so happens that last year's show was a film, so it's a whole new list of obstacles and questions we must answer. But I think we'll attack it the same way we do every year, which is to focus on: What is the message we want to send this year, specifically? What are the shared experiences our audiences can relate to this year? And how are we going to examine those themes and tropes and queries in a new and exciting way that no one's ever done before. So just that.
DeLa: And fortunately, it seems to be a bottomless well of, um, topping jokes.

CA: I would expect nothing less. Is there anything related to the pandemic?
DeLa: Of course. We're in this rare moment where we've been through this collective trauma and now we're going through this collective sort of joy that is also a trauma of beginning to reenter, so I think that it would be impossible for us not to address that. Our thesis is always about really trying to hold all the complexities of how joyous and how difficult the holiday season can be, and this year there's just a lot of layers on top of that.
Jinkx: I'm very much someone who

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takes what happens in my life, I form a story around it, and just tell you stories from my life. Whereas DeLa takes experiences from her life and then pushes it through a whole Play-Doh factory of synthesis and artifice and stylization. Our writing style together has become a marriage of those two ways of going about it. This year, because of the extenuating circumstances of the last two years, I think we're leaning more into reality than in the past, but still maintaining that stylized [sense of] "How do we comment on reality [as] fictional drag queens?"

DeLa: The characters have been through everything that we collectively have been through, but we're always gonna abstract it by having it be like a talking peppermint that's gonna help us resolve our feelings, you know?

Jinkx: It's not gonna be like group therapy; it's gonna be like watching two crazy ladies.

DeLa: Because people wanna feel seen in their experience, but they also want a break, right? We need to experience some joy right now. So our hope is to bring all of those things.

Jinkx: Yeah. Live vicariously through us as we process trauma in an entertaining way. [Laughs.] You get drunk and sit back, and we'll do the work.

CA: You had a naked man in the TV special. Will you bring a naked man with you on stage for the live show?

DeLa: If only the Delta baggage limit would allow for a carry-on that heavy.

CA: I'm sure you can find a man in every town willing to get naked.

Jinkx: We'll put it in our rider.

DeLa: You know what? Shockingly, the man in each town you haven't met that's willing to get on stage naked is generally not the person you want on stage with you.

Jinkx: [Laughs.] I mean, if I had it my way, there'd be full-frontal nudity in everything that I do, but that's just a perfect example of certain things you can pull off in a movie that you can't necessarily do on stage.

DeLa: All right, I'm getting the hint. I will be fully nude for this entire tour.

CA: What are you most looking forward to when it comes to getting back on the road and being in front of a live audience?

Jinkx: Uh, how do I say all of it without it sounding like a cop-out answer?

DeLa: But it's the actual answer. I mean, the actual relationship with the audience, the live energetic exchange, the exchange that we get to have with each other as like a threeway with the audience [laughs], for lack of a better way to speak about it. But I mean, I'm even looking forward to the stuff that usually is the hardest stuff. I'm looking forward to, you know, trying to sleep on an airplane unsuccessfully and then going straight to tech and having to do a show again. I just… I can't wait to live life as a performer again.

Jinkx: Yeah, honestly, if I could take my cat on tour with us then I'd have it all. Oh, and my husband. [Laughs.]

CA: Is there something about Christmas that gives you a different kind of permission to be completely outrageous?

DeLa: I mean, we've never needed much permission. But what I do think is that generally it gives a lot of other people permission, which is why I think it's such a successful marriage between drag and the holidays: because it's a time of year where I think so many people indulge in that kind of excess.

Jinkx: Yes! Straight people have three points in the year to dress up like us. They have Halloween, Christmas and the Kentucky Derby, for some reason. [Laughs.]

CA: What part of getting into drag really makes you feel the Christmas fantasy?

DeLa: You know, I love being in drag much more than I enjoy getting into drag at this stage of my career. [Laughs.]

Jinkx: Yeah, if I had a button that I could just push that would put me into drag immediately, I'd give almost anything for that.

DeLa: That Judy Jetson helmet from the opening credits of "The Jetsons" that she just puts on, and then she's gorgeous.

Jinkx: But I think it's all gonna feel new again, now that I'm reentering the world like a hairless, pink little baby. [Laughs.]

CA: The last live show in 2019 was

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called "All I Want for Christmas Is Attention." What's all you both want this year?
DeLa: Attention. [Laughs.] Turns out that I spoke too soon. I need it more now.
Jinkx: Yeah, with a heavy side of validation. And if there's time, the dismantling of the patriarchy.
DeLa: Yes, the fall of capitalism and also for people to collectively take Covid safety and vaccines seriously enough for us to be able to go on tour without the constant fear that the rug could be pulled out at any moment. [Laughs.]
Jinkx: Yeah. It feels like Michael Myers is stalking slowly behind us.
DeLa: But at least six feet away at all times.

CA: Besides each other of course, who is your favorite queen that does something totally different from what you do?
DeLa: Totally different? But I like the queens who are like me!
Jinkx: Two of my other best drag sisters are Alaska and then Bob the Drag Queen. I feel like Bob the Drag Queen and I have very different styles but a shared central passion for what we do and a shared respect for the art form.
DeLa: I guess I was picturing that I had to think of something that was a far cry from what I do. I mean, they're definitely different from you, but there's definitely a world of theatricality within that. I would say there's a lot of drag queens who have really inspired me over the years. This performer doesn't even really identify as a drag queen, but Dina Martina, who is also a storyteller and theatrical chanteuse, is one of the most brilliant performers out there.

CA: If both of you returned to "RuPaul's Drag Race" and did Snatch Game as a duo, which legendary iconic duo would you be?
Jinkx: The answer that's right in front of us would be Ren and Stimpy.
DeLa: I don't know that it's the most interesting choice but Lucy and Ethel feel like maybe the most obvious choice. I would be really into doing Laurel and Hardy just because I'd like to see us in those looks.
Jinkx: Oh, I know my answer! Bette Davis and Joan Crawford.

CA: Getting back to the holidays, what's a holiday tradition that you wish would just die?
DeLa: I think we've killed most of the ones we don't like already, but let's see. I have to think back. I will say I do not enjoy gift giving. I like gift giving as a general practice, but at the holidays it seems transactional. Like, I wanna give a gift because I found a thing, and it made me think of somebody. In my family growing up, it was all very much like, "Here is this gift, but what do I get in return?" So that's not something I enjoy. I prefer the experiences and the togetherness.
Jinkx: I'm trying really hard to think, and I just can't. Like there's plenty of traditions that I'm like, "What's that all about?" But then there's always a way to make 'em fun.
DeLa: What about going to church in the middle of the night? I wanna let go of that one.
Jinkx: Yeah, anything that's too religious-y. [Laughs.]
DeLa: So Christmas?
Jinkx: [Laughs.]
DeLa: What Jinkx would do away with is Christmas.
Jinkx: [Laughs.] Yeah, I'd take us back to solstice, you know. Take us all the way back. You know, people are talking about how we go back to those old-timey Christmases of yore. I'm like, go all the way back.

Chris Azzopardi is the Editorial Director of Pride Source Media Group and Q Syndicate, the national LGBTQ+ wire service. He has interviewed a multitude of superstars, including Cher, Meryl Streep, Mariah Carey and Beyoncé. His work has also appeared in The New York Times, Vanity Fair, GQ and Billboard. Reach him via Twitter @chrisazzopardi.

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GRAB GINA

Photo By Arnold Neimanis

Schock treatment: An interview with Gina Schock of the Go-Go's

By Gregg Shapiro

Too much of the Go-Go's is never enough. In the 40 years since the all-female punk band burst on the scene with its unforgettable debut album Beauty and the Beat to some of the band members' solo careers that followed its break-up to its ongoing reunion and the eye-opening 2020 documentary about the band, we just can't get our fill. But wait, there's more! Gina Schock, the Go-Go's legendary drummer (she's got the beat!), has just published a sensational coffee table book Made In Hollywood: All Access with the Go-Go's (Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2021) that features photos from Schock's own stock, as well as her own personal recollections of her life in music. Gina was gracious enough to make time for an interview before the publication of the book as well as the Go-Go's long-awaited induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in October 2021.

Gregg Shapiro: I'd like to begin by congratulating you, as well as the rest of the Go-Go's, on your induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. How do you feel about this?
Gina Schock: It took so long for this to happen, and at first we were sort of like, "Hell's bells! We don't even care anymore." Every year, we'd think "Maybe it's gonna happen next year," and it just wasn't happening. Then it happens! We were all dumbfounded. We couldn't really believe that we were nominated and then we got inducted! Everybody was pleasantly surprised. This is kind of great, kind of neat. I'm really happy about this now [laugh].

GS: At the same time, your memoir *Made in Hollywood: All Access with the Go-Go's*, is being released. What did the experience of writing such a book mean to you?
Gina: Actually, Gregg, it's not a memoir. Kathy (Valentine) wrote a memoir. Mine is actually a book of photography.

GS: Right, but you also tell your story in the book.
Gina: There's a lot of writing in it, too. But I basically put this together because I had tons and tons of photographs. I've been moving them all over. Putting them in the closet here, under the bed there. I was like, "I have to do something with

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Sun	Dec 12 3pm-9pm	World's Shortest Holiday Bar Crawl
Tues	Dec 14 8pm-10pm	Big Gay Holiday Gayme Show with Sofonda Booz
Wed	Dec 15 8pm-11pm	Wil's Winter Workshop Ornament Decorating
Sun	Dec 19 2pm-6pm	Sunday Social Slay Ride Drag & Burlesque Revue
Thurs	Dec 23 9pm-1am	Thirsty Thursday Karaoke Bradley K8's Holiday Heauxdown
Closed Christmas Eve. & Christmas Day		
Fri	Dec 31 5pm-2am	New Year's Eve. Pajama Party Game Night

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Photo By Arnold Neimanis

this. All these years of taking photos of the band." Of course, everybody in the band was like. "Gina, you really need to put a photo book together!" I finally found the right guy to do it with and he helped me get it together, organize it, and help me work on the book. I couldn't believe that along with the list of my credits will be photographer and author. It's kind of mind-blowing. Things that you don't think you're capable of, and then when you have an opportunity to do something and maybe make a difference…certainly for The Go-Go's. This needed to be out there. This is way long overdue; a book of photos with all of us. Photos that I've had that people have never seen. Also, you're getting these photos from a band member's perspective. With writing from one of the band members about what was going on during that period of time.

GS: I'm sure that looking at the pictures brought back lots of memories, but were you also a journal or diary keeper?
Gina: Check this out! I don't have a journal, but since 1978, Gregg, I have been keeping daily planners every single year. I've written down things that were going on during that time period. Not big, long stories, but this happened today, that happened yesterday, next week we're going to be doing this. I used that as my reference. It was invaluable in the process. I now need to make room for them in the closet. I've got them all in drawers in cabinets in my office. It's like, "OK, there's no more room here [laughs]!" They were invaluable, like I said, in putting this together. What exact date did this happen? What was going on in November of '83? It was important to have.

GS: Do you see the book as an extension of Alison Ellwood's 2020 Go-Go's documentary?
Gina: No, but I'll tell you that 99 percent of the photos in Alison's documentary are mine.

It's not an extension of that. This book has been in the works for decades. I just needed to find the right person to help me get it together. But when Alison was interviewing, I'd show her a photo and she would say, "Gina, can we come back and get some of these photos for the documentary?" I was like, "Of course, you can!" The majority of what you saw are my photos.

GS: The book is full of marvelous personal history details, such as performing with the late Edith Massey, known to many from her performances in some of John Waters' movies. What do you think Edie would think of the book?
Gina: She would be, [imitating Massey] "Oh, Gina, I'm so happy about your book! Finally, it's about time!" Bless her heart and soul. I was doing an interview yesterday and I said, "If it wasn't for Edie, I don't know if The Go-Go's would exist. Certainly not in the way that they have for the last more than 40 years. Things happen in a magical way, how it all comes together. No one really knows why somebody meets someone on that particular day at that particular time, and then something comes out of that that you can't believe. Edie gave me the opportunity to come out to LA and San Francisco and New York and actually play in clubs. We got to play at Max's Kansas City and CBGB's; what a thrill that was. Then to come to LA and do three nights of the Nuart Theater and then play The Warfield up in San Francisco. That was the first time I'd ever been on a plane! After doing that with Edie, the minute I got back to Baltimore I realized it was time to make a move. It gave me the courage to believe that I could go back to any one of these places and I'm going to do something! By the way, Edie was such a lovely person. A sweetheart.

GS: Another scoop for the readers that I loved was the part about the Go-Go's performing with ska in the early 1980s, leading to the collaboration with Terry Hall on the song "Our Lips are Sealed," which was a much bigger hit for the Go-Go's then for Terry's band Fun Boy Three. Do you know how he felt about that?
Gina: I have no idea how he felt, but I'm sure he was happy because all Terry Hall was hearing was "ka-ching, ka-

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ching, ka-ching [laughs].” I think Terry was quite happy about that. I would be. When Jane brought in the song, she was scared to death to play it for us because it was basically like a love letter that she readjusted a little bit lyrically and put some chords and a melody to. She played it for us, and we were like, “Jane, this song’s great!”

GS: It is great!
Gina: So, we worked that song up and it became a hit.

GS: We are all saddened by the recent passing of Charlie Watts, drummer for the Rolling Stones. In your book, you wrote about the Go-Go’s opening for The Rolling Stones. Can you please say a few words about what Charlie meant to you as a fellow drummer?
Gina: There were two drummers that were my heroes growing up. That was Charlie Watts and John Bonham (of Led Zeppelin). Those two guys are part of the reason I started and kept playing drums. To think that many years later I actually got to meet my hero and talk to him. I got to sit on his drum kit! I talked to his drum tech!

That was one of the biggest thrills of my life. Then to be able to just open for the Stones, I mean, God! Wow, what a thrill! He was, of course, a gentleman. Very quiet kind of guy; soft-spoken. A lovely guy; very personable, very sweet. I didn't have a lot of time to talk to him, but when I did my heart was pounding. I couldn't believe it. Meeting David Bowie was the same sort of thing. You have such adoration for these people. The impact they have on your life in many ways, not just musically.

GS: You put some personal thoughts and experiences in the book, including your open-heart surgery to correct an atrial septal defect, yours and the band’s encounters with drugs and recovery, the break-up of the band and issues with songwriting revenue. Was it painful or freeing to revisit these subjects?
Gina: It was a little bit of both. It brought up some really heavy things that went down. But all those things have been ironed out and taken care of. Everything is good now and it has been for many years. The songwriting splits were a big part of why the band broke up. It seemed very unfair to me. I have to tell the truth [laughs]. I have to be honest with the people that I'm working with. They are my family, and nobody can hurt you worse than somebody in your family. I think I explained it all in the book the best that I can.

GS: Following the original break-up of the Go-Go’s, you formed the band House of Schock with Vance DeGeneres, brother of Ellen DeGeneres. What are the chances that, aside from the Smothers Brothers, two funny people would come from the same womb?
Gina: Yeah, right [laughs]? It’s crazy, right? Vance was fresh out of New Orleans and I don't know how I met him; (through) a friend of a friend or something. We hit it off right away. I don't like to do anything by myself, Gregg. I always want a partner in crime. I like a team! That’s why I always want to be in a band. I never want to be a solo anything. I like being in a band. I like having other people to bounce ideas off of. I'm not the greatest at anything, but I’m pretty good when you put me with somebody else who’s talented as well. Vance and I worked great together. Ellen had just come to town and she was just starting out in the comedy clubs. We’d meet and have dinner. She’d ask me lots of questions about who I thought was a good agent to see. It was very sweet to watch everything happen for her. One of the funniest things, I told this to somebody the other day, I'll never forget this. Ellen said to me, “Gina, do you think if I make a lot of money one day, would you sell me your house [laughs]?” I don't remember what I said, but I'll never forget her asking me that. Because Ellen could buy a city block!

GS: In 2018, the Go-Go’s went to Broadway with the musical Head Over Heels, featuring the band’s music. What was that experience like for you?
Gina: That was another unbelievable moment being in the Go-Go’s. To think that this punk band, so many years later, has a musical on Broadway is absurd. But it happened! It's another crazy thing that just happened! There’s a lot of work involved, don’t get me wrong, and years and years of being in this band and working our butts off to achieve the status that we have in the industry. But it was still an incredible thrill. To meet all the Broadway actors

and all, my God, those people can really sing and act! I was never a big fan of Broadway, but I am now. I was knocked out! They’re so fucking talented. It’s such a thrill to watch them interpreting our songs woven into this 17th-century short story.

GS: Recently, Belinda’s son (James) Duke (Mason), posted a happy birthday message to you on social media in which he referred to you as his “Auntie.”
Gina: Yes! I love Dukie! I watched that little boy grow up. I just adore him. I will always be in his life. He’s very precious to me.

GS: When Duke came out, Belinda became a very outspoken advocate for the community. Would you mind saying a few words about your connection to the LGBTQ+ community?
Gina: I don't know what my relationship really is. All I know is that I’m who I am. I’m a musician and I will fight for anything or anybody that has had a difficult time in society. Just live your life. Society creates its own dos and don’ts and rights and wrongs for people, which is just a load of crap to me. Everyone should be allowed to be who they are, and love who they want to love, and marry who they want to marry. Love is love; it has no gender. It’s the most important thing we can give to one another. It’s what this world needs now more than ever. Never think for a second you haven’t got the right to love whomever you fall for because love is always right. It is a human right!

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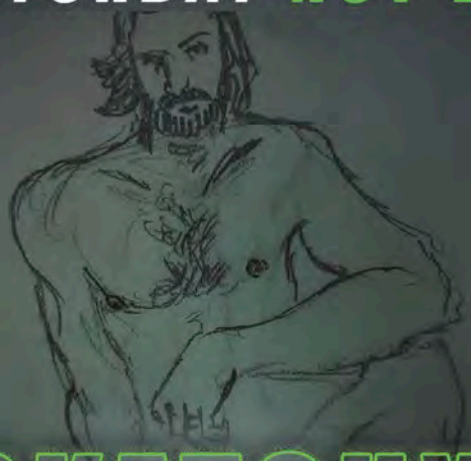

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Daily Specials

Monday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlies:** Darla Dae's Bingo 7 – 11 pm Dancing until close**. Houndstooth:** .75 Boneless Wings, $12 Domestic Pitchers,$15 Premium Pitchers, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** Lips and Mascara Doors at 8pm Show at 10pm. **Lark:** Happy Hour 5-7pm, Bottles of Wine 50% off with dinner entree purchase. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 4pm, Dancers 8pm. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Well Drinks. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Every 3rd Monday TM4M (Trans Men For Men) 8pm-2am. **Touche:** Euchre Night Come out and Play 7-10pm Club Room open.
Tuesday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** TuneUp Tuesday Karaoke 7 – 11PM, Tag Team Tuesdays 11p – 2am, Dancing until close. **Houndstooth:** $2 Tacos, ½ Off Bottles of Wine, $5 Red or White Sangria, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** 8/10 TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis **Lark:** 50% Off Bottles of Wine with any Entree Purchase, Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $6 Big Miller Lite Drafts, $3 House Shots, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. **Steamworks:** Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). **Touche:** Hardcore Cruisin' Sponsor Leather 64Ten. No cell phones/Wifi.
Wednesday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, Sapphire's Secret Shadows 10pm – 1 am, Dancing until close. **Houndstooth:** $4 Appetizers, $7 Burgers, $3 Domestic Drafts, $5 Premium Drafts, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis **Lark:** Free Bingo, 50% Off Nachos & Totchos, $8 Villa One Margaritas Frozen or on the Rocks, Traditional Flavor only. Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $3 Miller Lite Drafts, $4 Stolis (All Flavors), $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am $5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Taylor & Ariana 4th Wed of month – all 9pm-2am. **Steamworks:** Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. **Touche:** Jockstrap Night Sponsored by Full Kit Gear, Free Clothing check.
Thursday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** Survivor 10 pm – 1 am, Dancing Until Close. **Houndstooth:** $2.50 Minis • $3 College Beer, $6 40'S, $5 Absolut Bombs, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** RuPaul's Drag Race Season All Stars Viewing Party Doors Open 6:30pm, Bubble POP Hosted by Khloe Coulee 9pm. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars 6 viewing party & Bogo Pizza 7pm, Buy One Pizza, Get One Pizza Half Off (Dine in Only), Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 You Call It's, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $5 Deep Eddy Cocktails **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Open 2pm-2am, $5 Drafts & Cans, $6 Stoli Vodka Cocktails, $7 Glasses of Wine, $8 Larceny Old Fashioneds, $5 Bud Lights 4-6pm **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, Chicago's RuPaul's Drag Race Viewing Party 7pm, Drag & Games Dance Party 9pm-2am **Steamworks:** Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. **Touche:** 11/25 Thanksgiving Open 8pm.Throwback Thursdays 70's-80's Music & Porn by Bijou Video.

GRAB YOUR FRIENDS

Friday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's:** 1st and 3rd Fierce Fridays 10p – 1am, 2nd Fierce Fridays - Traffic Light Party 10p – 1am, 4th Fierce Fridays - Glow Up Party 10p – 1am, 5th Fierce Fridays – Strut 10p – 1am, Dancing until close. **Houndstooth:** $6 Pulled Pork or Pulled Chicken Sandwich, $6 Absolut Mules, $12 Domestic Pitchers, $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** 8/6 Fresh Faces A New Drag Competition Second and Forth Friday of the Month. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis. **Lark:** Bud Light $5, Select Wine $5, Well Cocktails $6 5-7pm. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 6pm. $5 drink specials.. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Tito's, $7 Big Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 4-7pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Shakers:** $4 Domestic Bottles $5 Well Mixed Drinks, $10 Giant 23oz Long Islands in 22 flavors. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, T.G.I.F. Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. **Touche:** 11/26 ONYX Club Night.
Saturday	**@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm -1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-3am. **Charlie's:** Country Line Dancing 7 – 10pm, The Main Event 10pm – 1am Dancing until Close. **Houndstooth:** Brunch 11am-3pm $15 Bottomless Mimosas, $6 Michelada's, $2 Breakfast Sliders, $5 Stadium Cups (ALL DAY), $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets.. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $5 Signature Margaritas, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** $10 Champagne Bottles, $5 Juice Kits, $3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.). **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, SaturGay Drag & Games 3-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day Saturday 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. **Touche:** 11/13 Dungeon Master Night S&M Demo at Midnight CWB 5pm. 11/27 Ripe Party Dim Lights, DeepBeats, Go-Go Dudes, DJ Harry T. 12/4 Chicagos Bear Night, Night of 100 Santas Toys for Tots benefit.
Sunday Funday	**@mosphere:** $6 Jack Products, $4 Domestic Draft, House Shots $2. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 2pm-2am **Charlie's:** Queeriod! Every other Sunday 5pm – 7pm, Singsational Sunday Karaoke 7pm – 11pm Mas Leche 11pm – 1am, Dancing until close. **Houndstooth:** Brunch 11am-3pm $15 Bottomless Mimosas, $6 Michelada's, $2 Breakfast Sliders, $6 40'S (ALL DAY), $12 Domestic Pitchers (ALL DAY), $5 Chambongs, $3 Fireball, $22 Bud Light Seltzer Buckets, $22 Mexican Beer Buckets. **Hydrate:** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Divalicious brunch with Madam X 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm $8.95 Martinis . **Lark:** Free Flowing Brunch 11am-3pm. **Lucky Horseshoe:** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. **Meeting House Tavern:** $3 House Shots, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $5 Frozens, $5 Jäger, Fireball & Malort, $4 Tallboy Beers. **North End:** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm **Replay Beer & Bourbon Lakeview:** $10 Champagne Bottles, $5 Juice Kits, $3 Bud Lights 12-2pm, Weekend Buckets $25 All Day, Miller Lite, Corona Extra, Truly Punch Variety, Truly Wild Berry Seltzer, Freshie Tequila Seltzer (5 Cans per Bucket - Cannot mix and match.) **Sidetrack:** Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am **Touche:** Beer Bust $2 Bud Light Drafts, Bears vs Ravens at Noon, Movie Night 7pm

GRAB A HIT

Top 40 Dance Chart this week

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	Artist	Title
1	Kito x Bea Miller	Steal My Clothes (Clean Version)
2	Don Diablo	Cheque (Clean Radio Edit)
3	Lee Dagger & Melanie Fontana	Making It Up (Luca Debonaire Radio)
4	KREAM x Millean	What You've Done To Me ft. Bemende
5	DallasK x Lauv	Try Again
6	Win and Woo	Good Catch ft. Sad Alex
7	Mahalo	Nothing Matters
8	SACHI	Down On Your Luck (Dance Radio Edit)
9	Viiq	Heartless
10	Surf Mesa Featuring Bipolar Sunshine	Lose My Mind
11	Lucas & Steve x Tungevaag	Paper Planes
12	Charli XCX	Good Ones (Joel Corry Remix)
13	Gregor Potter	Mean It
14	Mark Villa ft. Alessia Labate	Underneath
15	Noa Kirel	Please Don't Suck (DJ Strobe VIP Mix)
16	Purple Disco Machine	Dopamine ft. Eyelar
17	Riton x RAYE	I Don't Want You
18	Ofenbach x Ella Henderson	Hurricane
19	John De Sohn x Inyang Bassey	When The World Was Happy
20	TELYKast with Sam Gray	Unbreakable
21	Alesso & Marshmello	Chasing Stars ft. James Bay (VIP Remix)
22	Syn Cole	Drift
23	Steff da Campo	Delusional ft. Cassa Jackson
24	Paul Oakenfold & Aloe Blacc	I'm in Love
25	Sam Feldt	Call On Me ft. Georgia Ku
26	Sigma & Carla Marie	Hope (KC Lights Radio Mix)
27	York & Au Ra	Golden Hour
28	Karen Harding	You & I
29	DVRKO x Forbes	Mean Something
30	Sonny Fodera x KOLIDESCOPES x Sinead Harnett	Nah (KREAM Remix)
31	Morgan Page & Lights	Turn Off My Mind (Clean Edit)
32	Dennis Sheperd x JES	By My Side (Original Mix)
33	Sam Feldt & Sam Fischer	Pick Me Up
34	Tiesto & Karol G	Don't Be Shy
35	Kito Featuring Winona Oak	Skin & Bones
36	Riley Clemmons x GOLDHOUSE	Headspace
37	Frank Walker x Amber Van Day	Feel Like Us Again
38	Cheat Codes x Little Big Town x Bryn Christopher	Never Love You Again
39	Afrojack x Lucas & Steve x DubVision	Anywhere With You
40	A7S	By My Side (Radio Edit)

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New Air Bar, Bar Cecil Restaurant, and Tram Now Boarding

By Bill Malcolm

There's always something new to give you another reason to visit Palm Springs besides the great winter weather. My most recent visit included a stop at the hottest new restaurant in town, Bar Cecil, a stop at the aviation themed speakeasy Air Bar at Bouschet, and a trip up the tram for a hike in the San Jacinto mountains.

WHAT TO DO

Take the Palm Springs Aerial Tram up to the summit of Mt. San Jacinto and enjoy a hike (or snow shoeing) in the alpine meadows. The 10 minute trip on the world's largest rotating tram car takes just 10 minutes to ascend 8,500 feet from the base of Chino Canyon to the top of Mount San Jacinto where breathtaking views and pristine alpine wilderness await. Take a short hike in the Long Valley or visit the Winter Adventure Center. Details at ***pstramway.com***. Other ideas:

• Hike on the North Lykken Trail at the end of Ramon Road. Bring plenty of sunscreen and water.
• Explore the new Heritage Galleries and Antique District in Uptown.
• Visit the Palm Springs Air Museum to see the world's largest collection of flyable World War 2 aircraft.
• Check out the new city park downtown and the oversize statute of Marilyn Monroe.

THE BAR SCENE

Arenas Road downtown features most of the bars. Enjoy happy hour at Quads (but bring your vaccine card to get inside). The new speakeasy, AirBar, is a must. Enjoy cocktails while you sit on First Class seats from Northwest Orient or enjoy coach seating on what appears to be old Southwest Airlines seats (complete with seat belts) served by a bartender dressed like a pilot. This aviation themed bar is inside Bouschet. Don't miss the wine tastings, the Saturday night flight, and the Sunday disco and boozy Bruch. However, unlike airline travel, lunch and dinner are served (or available for purchase). Details at ***pspairbar.com***.

WHERE TO STAY

The Motel 6 Downtown has rates during the week that equal the resort fees you will pay at other hotels. It is steps to all the action. Other good choices include the Hotel Zoso, the Holliday House, and The Rowan by Kimpton. The Margaritaville Resort reportedly has the largest pool. But check the resort fees before you book. They can be $47 a day. Another great option is the Santiago Resort (***SantiagoResort.com***).

WHERE TO EAT

Ristretto is great for coffee and breakfast. Lulu's downtown has great quesadillas. The trout at the Eight4Nine Restaurant is to die for. El Mirasol has great Mexican food. The new Bar Cecil (restaurant) is a must. If you cannot get reservations, arrive early and sit at the bar. Vegetarians and juice lovers will want to try Nature's Health Food and Café.

GETTING THERE

Beware of the new hassles of traveling. American cancelled my outbound flight (staffing shortage?) so I ended up on Southwest. LA travelers might try the Flix Bus. You don't need a car if you stay in one of the downtown hotels. Also, save by taking the SunLine Bus to your hotel using the stop just outside the airport. It is just $1.

COVID RESTRICTIONS

Bring your vaccination card. Several businesses wanted to see it to let you in. Masks are required indoors at all places and on planes. Please check local restrictions before traveling anywhere as well as CDC guidelines.

UPCOMING

The Film Festival runs January 6 to the 17 while the Modernism week starts in mid-February.

For more information, go to the Visit Palm Springs website, **visitGreaterPS.com**.

You can also read or pick up a copy of GED Magazine (***GEDMag.com***), Rage Magazine, or the Coachella Valley Independent for a current list of happenings. The Desert Daily Guide is another great resource.

You won't run out of new and fun things to do in this desert LGBTQ + oasis which is always reinventing itself and always a delight to visit.

Bill Malcolm's syndicated LGBTQ value travel column runs in select LGBTQ publications around America. He focuses on value travel for the LGBTQ community and beyond. His opinions are his own. This is not a recommendation that it is safe to travel.

GRAB HOLLY

Assigned at Birth

By Holly Maholm

Sassy led the way to the back of the barn at the Horse Rescue, where Queen Penelope's stall was located. I bowed when I entered, and spoke. "Your Majesty, how may I be of service?" She motioned for me to be seated, and replied.

"Recently, I described to you the crisis which your species is facing: That you are failing to reproduce yourselves at even a replacement level, and in time must go extinct. I asked you to seek out the cause of this maladaptive behavior, and if possible, to find a cure. However, upon further reflection – and after consultation with my chief attendant, Sassy – it occurred to me that the welfare of the Species Unicorn might be better served if you – a human - remain ignorant of the cause – and cure – of what may prove your species' final, fatal infirmity."

She went on. "As I say, Sassy suggested I not share with you what I know. But then I thought more upon the subject, and I decided that inasmuch as you have been a loyal attendant to me, it would be most uncharitable to keep this secret from you. Because honestly, even if you – a human – were to learn the secret, there is little you can do to convince your fellow humans to so alter their behavior as to avoid the disaster they face. Accordingly, I am going to tell you the secret.

"You have been a member of this frolic long enough to have ascertained the 'roles and duties' assigned to its members – the mares and stallions, respectively. Now… these roles were by no means allocated by me; they were assigned from age immemorial by our Maker. I trust this concept is clear to you.

"Going on, you know that the Species Unicorn is very much older than the Species Human. Indeed, we have witnessed the development of your species over countless generations, and what we have observed is this: You humans have your own 'roles and duties' assigned to your females and males, again respectively, and that 'assignment' is nothing less than the common heritage of your race.

"The males of your species were assigned the role of 'hunters,' and they became adept at tracking and killing wild game on which you depended for meat, bone and hides. Your males became so skillful at killing that we Unicorns gave your species the name "Murder Monkeys,' as that was evidently the role assigned to you.

"But your females were almost another species entirely. They were smaller, less robust of bone and muscle, and – because their bodies were purpose-built for childbirth – were generally unsuited to hunting, tracking or killing. What is more, though your males were fueled by a "Murder Hormone" that produced aggressive, combative personalities, your females lacked that hormone. Accordingly, they were more gentle and nurturing, which is only apropos for a creature who gives birth.

"This was the 'gender binary' assigned to your species by our Maker. But recently, you humans have developed certain… 'technology,' I will call it, that your females believe empower them to 'reassign' those roles so long governed by the gender binary. Where before, your females were subject to powerful and inescapable bodily 'indignities' such as cramps, menstruation and childbirth, now, today, you have drugs and medical procedures to ameliorate such trauma.

"Accordingly, today, your females believe themselves empowered

to 'reimagine' vital aspects of those ancient roles and duties assigned to them by our Maker. All aspects of their fertility now being under their control, they turn their backs on their heritage and seek to declare themselves 'free and independent' of those shackles which once bound them to cribs, bassinets and baby bottles. In short, Holly, they are trying to 'redefine' the Species Human so as to 'cancel' the female gender. But we know – and especially, you know – what is the inevitable result when you disregard the wisdom of our Maker.

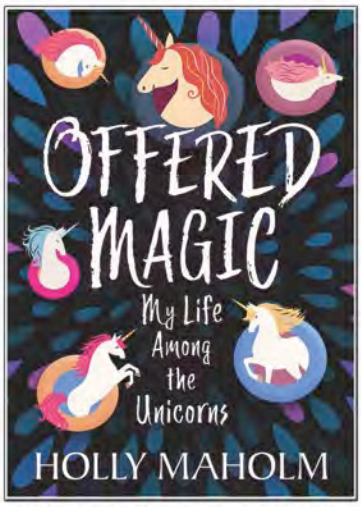
"You LGBT folk are but painfully aware that you have your own 'roles and duties' assigned to you by your Maker. Despite what the ignorant assume, no one of you is the author of your own erotic desires, nor of that gender which you feel is rightfully yours. These things are as much a part of you as the color of your eyes and the texture of your hair. Those of you who know yourselves to be gay or transgender soon learn it is fruitless to pretend otherwise; to try to renegotiate aspects of your soul which have been assigned to you by One Greater Than Ourselves.

"We can only hope that in time your females learn the same lesson: That there is more honor and satisfaction to be found in taking up that one, authentic burden assigned to us at birth, than to arrive at our destination unencumbered by those precious gifts entrusted to us by our Maker."

(To be continued)

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's new book Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly's adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at ***www.hollymaholm.com***

HOLLY'S NEW BOOK HAS BEEN RELEASED



AVAILABLE NOW ON AMAZON.COM

Photos By Anthony Meade

Kit Kat
lounge & supper club

GRAB A FILM

By Delven Shaw

THE FANS and ***IF I'M GOOD*** are powerful.

Some short films pack just as terror and joy as Hollywood features. Take ***If I'm Good*** and ***The Fans***, currently on Dekkoo, as examples.

The Fans is a brutal, sexually explicit depiction of two skinheads in Russia, who lure men into the woods where they are brutalized. When the men return to their own apartment, their desire for each other cannot be contained, as we watch them bathe, sleep, and sex. The demons that swallow them are unleashed again.

The two stars are unflinching in their depiction of their agony and ecstasy.

Based on real events, the film has been potently directed by ***Seva Galkin***, and its depiction of gay sex forced a Russian film fest to drop it from their lineup. It is a powerful, but disturbing watch.

If I'm Good, on the other hand, is also made from a distressing situation which feels like it was inspired by real life. But the contrast between the two films is delightful.

A widower explores his attraction to a younger man as he struggles to cope with his recent loss. Jono Mitchell plays Sam, whose late night trip to a pharmacy leads to a charming first encounter with Jorge (***Daniel Annone***).

Madison Hatfield's script is sure and sweet, as miscommunication and connection bring the two men together. ***Jonathon Pawlowski***'s confident and clever direction made me wish the film was longer.

Both shorts can be seen on Dekkoo.
https://youtu.be/I5-qVjXbY5I
https://vimeo.com/467952859

There are a lot of queer culture available screening right now. Check out the two-minute reviews at DelvenShaw.com for more!

Stylish killers sparkle in ***DEXTER*** and ***YOU***.

Sexy killers have always been a Hollywood staple, and this year two franchises who have both beern around the block are sparkling. Both ***Dexter*** and ***You*** are smart, scary, humorous, and charming and both will probably rattle your mind.

After several seasons away, ***Michael C Hall*** returns in the award winning *Dexter*. While I was a fan of the original series, it took a while to get back in sync with it. Dexter has spent 10 years being good, not committing any murders, and as he has created a new life in the woods of Maine. The writing is snappy and clever as Dexter has fallen in love with a cop, and now works in a hunting shop that sells guns and knives, challenging his determination to lead a good life.

As before, ghosts populate the world of Dexter. This time his sister is appearing to keep him on the straight and narrow path. When a teen arrives seeking the father who abandoned him, the stage is set for an intense and dramatic season.

Dexter had a huge audience for its first week. I suspect more discussion, and ulitimately more awards will follow.

People may also be talking about *You*, now in Season 3, another well made tale about another killer. Set in a beautifully photographed New York City, *You* focuses on Joe, a young and sexy book seller as played by ***Penn Badgley***. Joe becomes enamored with a client whose name is Guenevere Beck (***Elizabeth Lail)*** who is sexy and smart, but troubled by consistantly made bad choices. Joe is made even more likeable when he introduces the world of classic books to a young boy who lives next door.

The cast is terrific, the sets and production design are appealing, and by the end of the first episode you'll be hooked. Will Joe win over Guenevere, or be her last lover? No doubt Joe has secrets, perhaps some of them bloody.

Based on the books by ***Caroline Kepnes***, *You* was developed by ***Greg Berlanti*** and ***Sera Gamble***. Belanti is celebrated as a gay icon, not only for his work, which ranges from "Brothers & Sisters" to `Riverdale", but also for his marriage - to soccer star and activist *Robbie Rogers*.

You season 3 is now on Netflix. Dexter is on Showtime.
https://youtu.be/l9H1uSS_zkk
https://youtu.be/T_GTn88hjFI

THE SHORT FILMS OF ROBERT W GRAY

I don't spend too much time on Dekkoo, as films are sometimes dated, or were not good enough for the major streaming services. But recently, I found some shorts to be of interest.

The Short Films of Robert W Gray is an intriguing collection of his works from 2015/16. Linked only by theme, the four short films - ***Bed, Aidos, Choke Hold***, and ***Zack and Luc.*** Are an entertaining sliver of gay life.

Aidos is strangely moving, as we learn that by the time he died, 21 people had told Ben they loved him. And seeing twenty one different people, in tight closeups, saying those words, has a profound build. Some young, some old, men and women - the affection they feel for Ben, and the fact we don't know in any way what happened, makes it a short classic.

Bed is a short documentary featuring an array of men who talk about beds they loved, beds they hated, beds they shared. It reveals a lot in a snappy way that will probably make you smile, and think back on some of your most memorable experiences in bed.

Choke Hold is a mysterious series of meetings between a straight man who has a curiosity in knowing what happens when you are choked unconscious. It is strangely erotic, and nerve wracking, as you never know if an episode will go to far.

Zack and Luc is the weakest of the films, as you watch on split screen a relationship begin and then unspool. In addition to the split screen, the film is intentionally distressed, which for me did not add to the story.

But that is a small complaint for a Dekkoo event that provided a sweet surprise. .

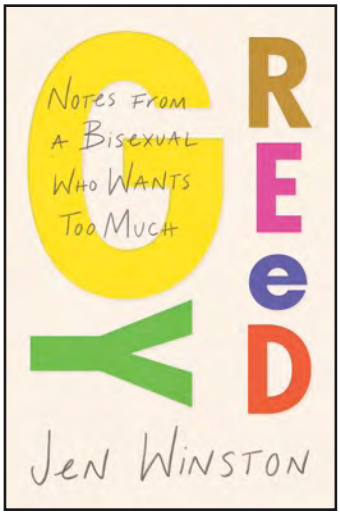
Watch all of ZACK AND LUC here
https://youtu.be/uFi19jR8htw

Photos By Anthony Meade

GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"*Greedy: Notes from a Bisexual Who Wants Too Much*" by Jen Winston c.2021, Atria $18.00 / $25.00 Canada 336 pages



Share, and share alike.

Which may, in retrospect, be the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard. You're not asking for the stars and the moon; you just want what you want and why pass it around? As in the new book "Greedy" by Jen Winston, who'd ever think that getting what you deserved to have was wrong?

Back in the "aughts," when Jen Winston was rocking her AIM handle and pretending to be boy-crazy, she had no word for liking boys and girls – though she knew she did. Had she questioned anyone, she would have been told that it was a phase, an experiment, or a matter of confusion but she never asked. She instinctively knew that doing the "gay stuff" was hard.

As she grew up and learned the word for what she felt, the idea of being with a woman became more appealing but not quite comfortable. Yes, Winston quietly told herself, she was bisexual, but bisexuality "never felt queer enough." Besides, dating straight men was like the equivalent of "comfort food," though it never worked and was really not much fun.

Various roommates through the years indulged in her search for love, though, by crowdsourcing answers to questions posed by online dates. They also looked the other way as Winston learned that self-pleasure could be ugly, and she didn't want to be "U-G-L-Y." She tried threesomes but, they were loaded with potential rejection; she tried chatrooms but they were scary. She learned that "we" is a painful word when you're not part of it.

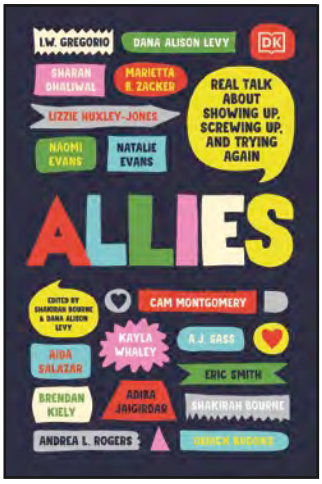
Bisexuality comes with a lot of frustrating myths and bisexual people, says Winston, are sometimes not included in the LGBTQ+ community. Bi people aren't especially promiscuous – they're not trying to steal your partner from you – and they're not all just white or female. What they are is: well aware that dating sucks, fairy tales are hard to believe in, and that there are lots of different ways to be gay...

You want it all: you want hearts-and-romance but you also want down-and-dirty. You want to be heard, but you don't want to talk about it. You want to be enough but not so much that it's weird. And you want it with laughs, though that's not the main thing about this book.

While its cover indicates lightheartedness and author Jen Winston seems perfectly happy to tell funny, tongue-in-cheek tales about herself, "Greedy" sports a serious vein that almost feels like a shout. Winston writes of universal experiences – rejection, falling in love, vulnerability, and wanting so much to be adored – and she makes light of them in a way that clearly isn't meant to be all that humorous. We can chuckle, yes, but she also lets us pretend that we don't care about those hurts – even though, like Winston, we all know that we do.

Be aware that there are chapters here that are very graphic and are very much not appropriate for just anyone. If Winston's journey is your journey, too, though, "Greedy" is something to share.

"Allies: Real Talk about Showing Up, Screwing Up, and Trying Again" by various authors and writers, edited by Shakirah Bourne & Dana Alison Levy c.2021, Dorling Kindersley Ltd. $16.99 / $21.99 Canada 240 pages



You'd do anything for your friends.

You help them in school when they need it, or with a loan in a pinch. Your home is their home, and vice versa. You might share clothes with your friends, seats, secrets and for sure, support but what about people you don't know that well? In the new book "Allies" by various authors, you start upright and on your feet.

School has started and some kids – kids of color, queer kids, different kids – are struggling. You want to help but you don't know how to even begin. So now what?

The first thing to know about being an ally is in the first chapter of this book: you will screw up sometimes. It's not fun, it's comfortable, and you can't just dump your guilt back on whoever you're trying to support. Instead, learn from it, and get used to it.

But wait. Can't you help?

"It's complicated," says Dana Alison Levy, the first author.

You can loudly be an ally, but when it's not your time to speak, then hush. Allies remember that pronouns are important things (see above: you'll screw up) and when someone reveals their preferred name, an ally makes sure it's used. Allies know that the letters "LGBTQIA" don't stop at "G." When they see someone with a disability, they don't rush in and act like superheroes. They ask first if they can help, and they never see a disabled person as a "tool" to get extra privileges. Likewise, they don't finish sentences for a stutterer and it should go without saying that allies are never bullies. Nope, they reach for understanding, and if they don't understand, they can be schooled.

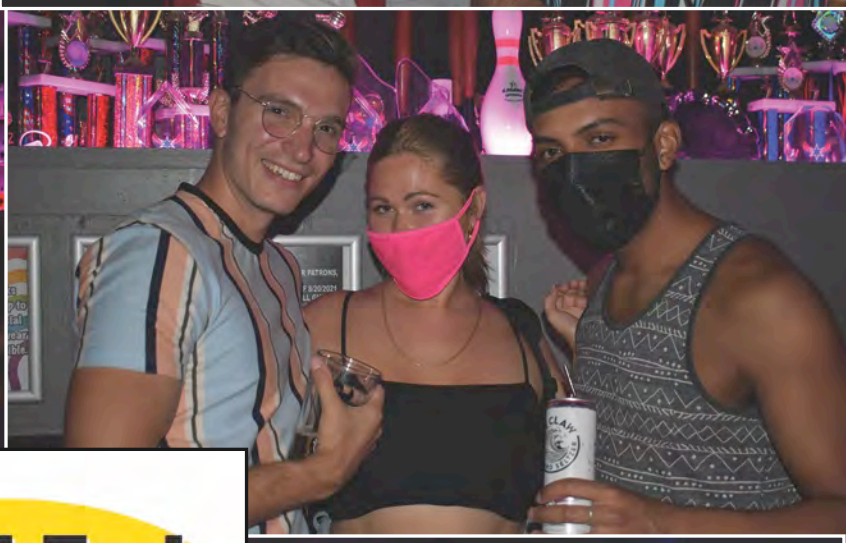
Being an ally doesn't stop at sexuality or disability, though. You can be an ally for women by standing up to misogyny. You can stand up by seeing color and acknowledging it. You can stand up and admit that there are things you'll never experience.

And sometimes, being an ally is knowing when it's time to walk away...

When it comes to being a better friend to those who need one, you always want to do what's right – but sometimes, right is wrong and arrrrgh! It seems like maybe you need something of an ally to be an ally, and this book can help.

With straight talk but a light touch, "Allies" helps young readers dispense with the awkwardness of not knowing how to act, through reassuring stories meant to show that merely just showing up is a great start. The chapters aren't long – some are told with artwork – and they're as diverse as the writers themselves. They're not preachy, either: each is told by an appreciative person who's received much-needed support and others whose eyes were opened, giving readers the upbeat, forward-looking, I-can-do-this feeling they might get in the eager moments before a march or a rally.

That makes "Allies" a great first step for any progressive-thinking 12-to-18-year-old who needs a good launch-point. Find this book, read it, and share it with your friends.



THE NorthEnd
EST. 1983

Photos By Anthony Meade

G FLIP RECRUITS UPSAHL FOR NEW SINGLE *"SCREAM"*

Drummer-turned-solo star and queer icon **G Flip** (***Georgia Flipo***) turns up the heat with the release of their new single "*Scream feat. Upsahl,*" out now via Future Classic. A tale about lust and longing, *"Scream"* marks a celebration of passion and intimacy, and is anchored by G Flip's raw and engaging lyricism, stellar production and the addition of American singer-songwriter ***Upsahl***.

Of the release, G Flip says: 'There's no hiding the fact that this song is about sex. This is my horniest song to date. I was super stoked to get Upsahl on the track, she is an absolute legend and a great musician, we had a lot of fun with it. We tee'd it up during lockdown when I was in Melb and she was in the US. We had a facetime and she was like "DUDE this track is fire", and I said "Yeah it's a pretty horny song, smash a verse on it and add what you like" - she killed it on her first try. Once I got to LA we finally got to meet and hang and we made a very sexy film clip. To my family... probably don't watch the clip cause it gets a bit too raunchy!!'

Upsahl adds: 'The day G sent me the song, I lost my shiiiit. I'm such a fan of G and of how real and authentic all of their songs are. I'm all for being unapologetically sexual in songs and 'Scream' embodies all that.'

G Flip's on a winning streak with a run of singles that feature old and new pals, and collaborators. The latest follows the bittersweet *"Waiting Game feat. renforshort",* as well as *"Not Even In Vegas feat. Thomas Headon," "My Mind" with Baker Boy, "Boys & Girls" with filous,* and *"Queen feat. mxmtoon,"* which became the unofficial anthem of Sydney's Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras (where G also got carried around on a throne while performing on the Tiktok float).

A formidable force in Australian pop, G Flip's meteoric rise has earned them a number of enviable accolades including a critically acclaimed debut album, multiple *ARIA Award* nominations, four places in the triple j's Hottest 100 of 2020 and 2019, the biggest Like A Version of last year, a *MTV EMA Award*, two limited edition *Crocs* collaborations, and a number of gold, platinum and multi-platinum certified singles.

G doesn't hold back in the spicy new video, watch it here
https://ffm.to/gflip_scream

SALT CREEK SHARE VIDEO FOR SINGLE *"SOUL JAR"*

90s grunge and midwestern roots inspired band ***Salt Creek*** have shared a new video today for recent single *"Soul Jar."* The video serves as an ode to the band's hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska. The single was taken from the band's debut album *Out of the Sky* – released October 15th via Tooth & Nail.

On the new video Salt Creek shares, "We filmed the video for Soul Jar with our friend Lindsey Yoneda. Our goal was to capture Lincoln, Nebraska and give people a tour of our hometown. A lot of people dismiss Nebraska as a flyover state, but those people can kiss my ass."

Last month Salt Creek released their debut album *Out of the Sky* via Tooth & Nail. "This record is about being yourself, talking to someone when you aren't feeling too hot, and knowing that shit gets better on the other side of things. A lot has happened in the last year or two, everyone is going through something or another right now, hopefully this album is a reminder that they're not alone in feeling that way, and there is more out there beyond that feeling," the band shared.

Ahead of the release of Out of the Sky, Salt Creek shared singles ***"INVU", "Soul Jar," "High Horse"*** and most recently ***"The Vine***." "INVU" illustrates the feeling of being isolated and abandoned by a close friend when you are in a sad, hopeless state of mind. "*Soul Jar",* another hard-hitting song, describes the feeling of wanting to escape who you are and become a new person. *"High Horse"* discusses the idea of rising above the hate and negative thoughts that people are so quick to put out in the world. *"The Vine"* focuses on looking back on past relationships through rose-colored glasses, allowing your heart to give less-than-pleasant memories a makeover despite what the rational part of your brain may say.

Inspired by 90's grunge and their midwestern roots, the four members—***Chase Thompson, Nathan Richardson, Zach Chrastil,*** and ***Nathan Skinner***—write songs that are introspective, driving, and refreshingly relatable.

For more visit
www.toothandnail.com/salt-creek

WAXFLOWER RELEASE NEW SINGLE "SOAK"

After releasing their heart-on-sleeve debut EP *We Might Be Alright* earlier this year, Brisbane pop-punk aficionados ***Waxflower*** reveal a change of pace with their new single *"Soak."*

Having explored the subtle addition of electronic elements in previous releases, Waxflower boldly step forward into the embrace of layered synthesisers, and a darker, heavier sonic direction. Keen listeners will also note a second vocal on the track - that of the band's guitarist ***Jordan Beard***. Despite this new contrast, the undercurrent of hopefulness for which the band have become known is still ever present on *"Soak."*

Mental health has been a consistent theme woven throughout Waxflower's lyrics, and *"Soak"* continues this narrative, exploring the anxiety and panic disorder experienced by frontman ***Tristan Higginson***.

"'Soak' is about the lowest of lows, standing before a hopelessness that feels insurmountable," says Higginson. "When my panic attacks were at their worst, I wanted a medicated lobotomy — I just wanted it to be done. The song zeroes in on those moments where you would give up anything for the pain to stop.

"The most intense struggles often feel the most insular. Being told "everything's going to be ok" doesn't do much when you're gasping for air. 'Soak' lives in those moments without an agenda, it's just down there, feeling the pain with you."

Entering the tail-end of 2021 with an expansive new sound, Waxflower's vision remains constant; to create moments of honesty and vulnerability within their music - doing so through an expansive range of sonic influences. *"Soak"* is the first drop in a flood of raw, emotive songwriting for Waxflower.

For more visit
www.waxflowermusic.com

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CHRISTMAS BINGO: IT'S A HO-HO-HOLY NIGHT CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Did Santa babysit the baby Jesus? Why were the Three Wise Men so lost? Do you know what the holiday classic Silent Night first sounded like? The answers to these and other humorous questions are answered in the hit holiday comedy Christmas Bingo: It's a HO-HO-Holy Night.

Written by ***Vicki Quade***, one of the creators of the hit comedy *Late Nite Catechism*, *Christmas Bingo* brings together two of the best things about being Catholic: Christmas and Bingo. The show features the character of Mrs. Mary Margaret O'Brien, a former nun and current bingo caller.

The comedy has been a fixture in Chicago since 2012, and now reopens on November 26 for six weeks during the 2021 holiday season. All shows will be at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago. There will be no performances on Christmas day.

Christmas Bingo is the second installment in Quade's bingo series, which also includes the long-running hit Bible Bingo. The show was selected as one of 10 holiday shows highlighted by *Chris Jones*, the Chicago Tribune's theater critic.

In this interactive comedy, audience members play bingo while also answering questions about Christmas traditions, the origin of St. Nick, where do candy canes come from, miracles in the Bible, and a clever re-creation of the Annunciation, complete with audience members in angel wings and halos.

Quade will be sharing the role of Mrs. Mary Margaret O'Brien with the talented Chicago actresses ***Nancy Greco*** and ***Kathleen Puls Andrade***.

Christmas Bingo will run for six weeks only throughout the holiday season, starting Friday, November 28, through Sunday, January 2, 2022. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m.

Late Nite Cathechism remains on the schedule at 5 p.m. Saturdays.

All performances are at the Greenhouse Theater Center, 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago. (***https://www.greenhousetheater.org/***)

Ticket prices are $35, group rates available. For tickets, call the box office at ***773-404-7336***.

HELL IN A HANDBAG PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS *CHRISTMAS DEAREST* NOVEMBER 27 – DECEMBER 31, 2021

Hell in a Handbag Productions continues its 20th anniversary season with the return of one of its most popular holiday musicals: *Christmas Dearest,* featuring book and lyrics by Artistic Director ***David Cerda***, music by *Cerda* and ***Scott Lamberty*** and direction by ***Derek Van Barham***. *Christmas Dearest* plays November 27 – December 31, 2021 at Ebenezer Lutheran Church Auditorium, 1650 W. Foster Ave. in Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood.

Joan Crawford (***David Cerda***) returns in Handbag's very own version of A Christmas Carol. It's 1953 and Joan is desperate to reignite her career with the new film, Oh, Mary!, a big splashy musical adaption of the life of the Virgin Mary. Everything has to be perfect, but the stress of surviving in Hollywood has turned Joan into a tyrant! Even Carol Ann (***Ed Jones***), Joan's faithful personal assistant is at her wits' end. What Joan needs is a miracle, and that's exactly what she gets when she's visited by three ghosts who try to show Joan the error of her ways and the true meaning of the holidays.

The cast also includes ensemble members ***Sydney Genco*** (The Virgin Mary), ***Caitlin Jackson*** (Bette Davis), ***Nicky Mendelsohn*** (Teeny Teena), ***Tyler Anthony Smith*** (Olive LaLake) and ***Danne W. Taylor*** (LB Mayer) with ***Mark Barty*** (Christina), ***Spencer Douglas Clark*** (Bill), ***Lolly Extract*** (Puppets) ***Marc Prince*** (Henry), ***Coco Sho-Nell*** (Vernita), ***Maiko Terazawa*** (Child Joan) and ***Marissa Williams*** (20's Joan).

Tickets are currently available at **christmasdearest.eventbrite.com**

THE DEN THEATRE PRESENTS COMEDIAN *GARETH REYNOLDS* SUNDAY DECEMBER 5TH ON THE HEATH MAINSTAGE

Comedian ***Gareth Reynolds*** brings his stand-up tour to The Den Theatre for one night only Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 7 pm on The Den's Heath Mainstage, 1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood.

Gareth Reynolds is an internationally touring stand-up comedian whose brilliantly clever quips perfectly offset ***Dave Anthony***'s hilarious snark on their smash-hit podcast *The Dollop*, which garners over 5 million downloads every month.

Gareth has written on *Arrested Development, Flaked* and *Hoops* for Netflix as well as *You're the Worst* on FX and *I'm Sorry* for truTV. Previous to that, he wrote on the Comedy Central sitcom *Idiotsitter*, took the lead on the ABC show *Hail Mary* and has been seen on IFC's *Maron*.

His debut stand-up album *"Riddled With Disease"* was released December 6, 2019 on Comedy Dynamics and reached #1 on Billboard that week.

Originally hailing from the sweet streets of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Gareth moved to Los Angeles where he began producing and writing his own material, eventually making shows at Comedy Central, the Travel Channel and MTV. He also has a cat named Jose.

Tickets ($16 - $33) are currently available at ***thedentheatre.com*** or by calling ***773-697-3830.***

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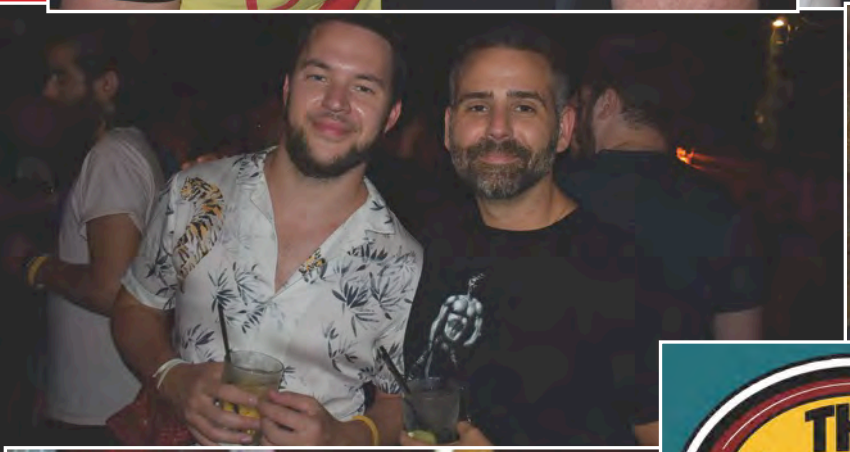

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